

## **Documents Requiring Original Signatures**

Documents that must contain original signatures or require either verification or an unsworn declaration under any rule or statute shall be filed electronically in PDF format. The originally executed paper documents must be maintained by the filer for a period of two years or until the appeal time has expired, whichever is greater.

## **Documents Submitted in Paper Format**

All documents submitted in paper form must contain an original signature. Electronic signatures are only applicable to e-filed documents. Since electronic filing is mandatory, documents that may be filed in paper include sealed items only. Exceptions can be made in cases where an attorney has been newly admitted and has not yet registered for CM/ECF or if an attorney is experiencing technical difficulties. Please contact the Clerk's Office for further details if you require a temporary exemption from electronic filing to be granted by the applicable judge.

## **Documents Requiring Electronic Signatures**

Signatures for electronically filed documents are discussed within Northern District Local Rule 5.1. The court also suggests that, in addition to the typical signature block, pleadings contain a typed signature in the form of **s/<attorney's name>** located on the traditional signature line above your signature block. The signature block itself should contain the information noted in the Local Rules; the court also requests the addition of your email address to the signature block. The **s/** name should match the name found within the text of the related docket entry, and that name is derived from the filing attorney's login name.

EXAMPLE:	<u>s/Attorney's Name</u>
	Attorney's Name
	Bar #
	Firm Name
	Address
	City, State, Zip
	Office Phone #
	Fax #
	Email address

## **Filing on the Behalf of Another Attorney (Also found in the CM/ECF FAQs)**

Northern District of Florida Local Rule 5.1(A)(7) allows a person "authorized to act on behalf of a Filing User" to use an attorney of record's password and login to e-file pleadings in a case. In addition, attorneys admitted to practice within the Northern District of Florida may file pleadings on behalf of another using their *own* CM/ECF password and login.

Choose from the following two options when filing on the behalf of another attorney:

1. The user authorized to e-file using the attorney of record's password and login should prepare the pleading so that the s/ signature and the signature block reflects the name of the attorney of record in the case. The authorized user may then e-file the pleading using the attorney of record's password and login. In other words, the login name of the filing attorney that appears in the final docket text should match the name that appears in the signature block of the PDF file.
2. An attorney who has been admitted to practice within the Northern District of Florida and who has received authorization from the attorney of record in a case may file pleadings on behalf of that attorney using their own CM/ECF password and login. The signature block on the pleading should contain the filing attorney's s/ signature at the court's suggestion and should also include a reference to the attorney of record in the case on whose behalf they are filing.

Example Signature Block:

s/ Sheila Hurst-Rayborn  
for William M. McCool

Sheila Hurst-Rayborn, Esq.  
Florida Bar Number 000000  
Hurst-Rayborn and Associates  
000 North Adams Street  
Tallahassee, Florida 32301-7717  
Office: 850/000-0000  
Fax: 850/000-0000  
email address (requested)

In the example above, the name that appears in the docket text would be Hurst-Rayborn, Sheila because that is the name associated with her CM/ECF login.

Attorneys choosing to employ option 2 will receive notification from CM/ECF during the docketing of the pleading that they are not an attorney of record in the case. If you do not plan to represent the associated party, then you may click the "next" button and continue with the event without associating yourself with a party. Attorneys who choose to skip the party/attorney association screen will not receive NEFs in the case.

Therefore, again using the example above, Sheila Hurst-Rayborn's name would *not* appear on the docket sheet header as an attorney of record if she chose not to associate herself with a party

during the docketing transaction.

## **Joint Pleadings**

In the case of a stipulation or other document to be signed by two or more persons, the following procedure is suggested:

- (a) The filing party or attorney shall initially confirm that the content of the document is acceptable to all persons required to sign the document and shall obtain the physical signatures of all parties on the document.
- (b) The filing party or attorney shall then file the document electronically using his or her own password and login, indicating the signatories, e.g., "s/Jane Doe,,", "s/John Doe", etc., within the docket text.
- (c) The filing party or attorney shall retain the hard copy of the document containing the original signatures for a period of 2 years or until the time for all appeals has expired, whichever is greater.

Attorneys should discuss and agree on an applicable filing procedure should the suggested process be insufficient. However, all implemented procedures should contain step c).

## **Sealed Documents/Cases**

Sealed documents cannot be filed by an attorney electronically and must be submitted to the clerk in paper format. In addition, attorneys cannot file documents in sealed cases and must submit related pleadings to the Clerk of Court in paper format for filing.